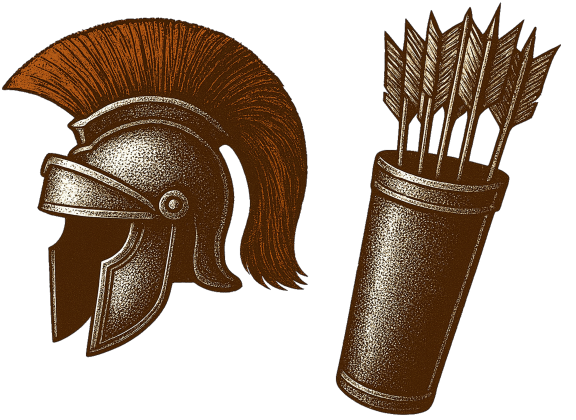
ARMOR AND ARROWS



A DEBATE MANUAL FOR EVANGELISTS

The Islamic Dilemma

An Ancient Question

In the 8th century, just over 100 years after Muhammad, Christians in the Middle East lived under the rule of Islamic Caliphs. Here, a respected leader named George of B'eltan, Bishop of the Arab tribes, was tasked with defending the Gospel. He faced a familiar accusation, one still heard today: "Your Bible has been corrupted."

Instead of anger, George responded with a calm, logical question that pointed directly back to Islam's own holy book. He wrote down his response for other believers, pointing out a huge problem with their claim. In short, he asked:

"Your Quran speaks of our Gospel with reverence and commands us to judge by it. If our Gospel was already corrupted, why would God's word affirm a falsehood and command us to follow it? But if it was not corrupted, why does your Quran contradict its core teachings?" — George of B'eltan

This is not a modern attack. This is an ancient question, and it remains the most critical, unresolved theological challenge within Islam.

About the Book

This pocket book equips you with the same clear reasoning once used by George of B'eltan. It breaks down the core problem he raised for Islam and shows why his points are still so important today. These pages are written to encourage meaningful dialogue—grounded in the same unwavering trust in God's Word that George displayed centuries ago.

This work is grounded in the call of Hosea 4:6 and 1 Peter 3:15, reminding believers that they must know what they believe and why they believe it, and be ready to give an answer with gentleness and respect.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge!" — Hosea 4:6

"Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect." — 1 Peter 3:15

This pocket-sized book is written to gently expose the cracks in the foundation of the Quran—inviting honest reflection, not blind faith.

The Heart of the Archer

- **Don't take the bait** - Don't match drama with more drama. Stay kind, stay calm, stay grounded. (Proverbs 15:1)
- **Set clear boundaries** - Even Jesus taught to walk away when people become toxic or unrepentant. (Matthew 10:14)
- **Don't try to fix them** - You are not their Holy Spirit. Your job is to reflect truth, not force change.
- **Speak truth in love** - We grow when we speak truth in love, not sarcasm, not guilt, not silence. Just honest words even when it is hard. (Ephesians 4:15)
- **Respond, don't react** - The fruit of the Spirit includes self-control. So pause, pray, then respond from a place of wisdom, not emotion. (Galatians 5:22-23)
- **Pray more than you preach** - God knows what they need, more than you do. When you cannot get through to them, pray!

The Islamic Dilemma

The Quran speaks of previous Scriptures with great respect, confirming their divine inspiration, authority, and preservation. At the same time, it contradicts them on the most essential doctrines such as the crucifixion, the deity of Christ, the Trinity and key accounts of the prophets. This creates a serious logical problem within Islamic theology.

To resolve this, many Muslims are taught that the previous Scriptures have been corrupted. This claim, however, leads to an inescapable dilemma. Let's consider the only two possibilities

Possibility 1
If the Scriptures before Muhammad were reliable—as the Quran itself implies—then Islam is false, because those same Scriptures contradict Islamic teaching on almost every core issue.

Possibility 2
If the Scriptures were unreliable, then the Quran undercuts itself, because it tells Muslims—and even Muhammad—to consult Jews and Christians about those very Scriptures. Why would the Quran validate corrupted books and direct its own prophet to them for confirmation?

What the Quran says

Before we explore the contradictions, let's first open the Quran itself. What does Islam's holy book say about the Scriptures that came before it?

The Quran tells us that the Torah and the Gospel are revelations from Allah.

"He has sent down upon you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, confirming what was before it. And He revealed the Torah and the Gospel." — Surah 3:3

"Indeed, We revealed the Torah, containing guidance and light, by which the prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah, made judgments for Jews." — Surah 5:44

"And We gave him (Jesus) the Gospel containing guidance and light and confirming what was revealed in the Torah." — Surah 5:46

"And We gave Moses the Scripture and made it a guide for the Children of Israel." — Surah 17:2

"Indeed, We gave the Scripture to Moses." — Surah 32:23

The Quran tells us that the Jews and the Christians should judge by the Torah and the Gospel.

"Say, 'Bring the Torah and recite it, if you are truthful'." — Surah 3:93

"O believers! Have faith in Allah, His Messenger, the Book He has revealed to His Messenger, and the Scriptures He revealed before..." — Surah 4:136

"But why do they come to you for judgment when they [already] have the Torah containing Allah's judgment, then they turn away after all?" — Surah 5:43

"So let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed in it. And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are the rebellious." — Surah 5:47

"O People of the Book! You have nothing to stand on unless you observe the Torah, the Gospel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord." — Surah 5:68

The Quran tells us that during Muhammad's time, the Torah and the Gospel were in the possession of the Jews and the Christians.

*"And believe in what I have sent down, **confirming that which is with you**, and do not be the first to disbelieve in it."* — Surah 2:41

*"...when there came to them a Book from Allah which they recognized, **confirming the Scripture they had [in their hands]**, they rejected it."* — Surah 2:89

*"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, **whom they find written** (maktūban) **in their Torah and Gospel**."* — Surah 7:157

The word that indicates that something is written is "مَكْتُوبًا" (maktūban), meaning that the Injil was written down—not only oral in nature.

The word "يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا" (yajidūnahu maktūban) is the imperfect tense in Arabic, meaning the present or the future. If the Torah or the Gospel was already corrupted at the time of Muhammad, the word would've been "وَجَدُوهُ" (wajaduhu), which is the past tense.

The Quran tells us that if Muhammad was in doubt about his revelations, he should confirm them with the Jews and the Christians.

"If you O Prophet are in doubt about these stories that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you." — Surah 10:94

"And We did not send before you, [O Muhammad], except men to whom We revealed. So ask the people of the reminder if you do not know." — Surah 16:43

"And We did not send before you, [O Muhammad], except men to whom We revealed. So ask the people of the reminder if you do not know." — Surah 21:7

The Quran does not only confirm the Torah and the Gospel but also declares that the words of Allah are eternally protected and can never be changed.

*"And we revealed to you the Book in truth, **confirming** (musaddiq[1]) **what was before his hands of the Book and a guardian** (muhaymin[2]) **over it**..."* — Surah 5:48

*"...**it is a confirmation** (tasdiq[3]) **of what was before it** and a detailed explanation of the Book."* — Surah 10:37

*"The Word of your Lord has been perfected in truth and justice. **None can change His Words**. And He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing."* — Surah 6:115

*"Recite what has been revealed to you from the Book of your Lord. **None can change His Words**, nor can you find any refuge besides Him."* — Surah 18:27

Musaddiq[1] (from saddaqa) = confirming.
Muhaymin[2] = guardian.
Tasdiq[3] (verbal noun of saddaqa) = confirmation.

In short, the Quran tells us that:

- The Torah and the Gospel are revelations from Allah. (Surah 3:3; 5:44; 5:46; 17:2; 32:23)
- The Jews and the Christians should judge by the Torah and the Gospel. (Surah 3:93; 4:136; 5:43; 5:47; 5:68)
- The Torah and the Gospel were in the possession of the Jews and the Christians. (Surah 2:41; 2:89; 7:157)
- Muhammad should confirm his revelations with the Jews and the Christians. (Surah 10:94; 16:43; 21:7)
- The Quran confirms the previous Scriptures. (Surah 2:41; 2:89; 2:91; 2:97; 2:101; 3:3-4; 3:81; 4:47; 5:43-48; 5:66-68; 10:37; 10:94; 12:111; 46:12; 46:29-30 and more.)
- None can change the words of Allah. (Surah 6:115; 18:27)

By the Quran alone, we can see that it makes no sense to claim that the Torah and the Gospel were corrupted in the time of Muhammad. When a Muslim holds the position that they were, they accept that Allah confirms corrupted Scriptures and that Allah was not telling the truth about preserving them.

Testimony of Early Tafsirs

A fair objection might be raised: “This is just a Christian interpretation of the Quran.” It is a crucial question that deserves a clear answer.

We will not offer our own opinion. Instead, we will dive into the most respected witnesses from within Islam itself: the classical scholars, jurists, and commentators who are the very architects of Islamic tradition. How did they understand these verses?

For centuries, their consensus was clear: the alleged 'corruption' of the Bible was a distortion of its meaning, not a change to its text!

*"They distort and add, and **no one among Allah's creation can remove a word from the Books of Allah**, but they distort it: **they interpret it in a way other than its intended interpretation.**"* — al-Bukhārī (d. 870AD) narrated from Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 687AD) in Ibn Kathir's tafsir on Surah 3:78

*"**The Tawrah and the Injil remain as Allah revealed them, and no letter in them was removed**... As for Allah's Books, they are still preserved and cannot be changed."* — Ibn Kathir (~1340–1373AD) on Surah 3:78

*"They 'tamper with the words', meaning: **they swap its meaning and distort its interpretation, not the wording itself.**"* — al-Tabari (923AD) on Surah 4:46

*"If the Torah and the Gospel had been textually corrupted, it would **not be logical for God to command the People of the Book to judge according to them.**"* — al-Māturīdī (944AD) on Surah 5:43-48

*"If the Torah had been fully altered, it would be impossible for God to appeal to it as a basis for judgment. **The evidence shows they distorted interpretation, not the text itself.**"* — al-Jaṣṣāṣ (981AD) on Surah 5:43-48

"This verse proves that the Torah and the Gospel were intact then, for had they been falsified God would not have commanded judgment by them." — al-Qurtubī (1273AD) on Surah 5:47

"The command may be phrased as judging by what is in the Gospel to indicate that it has not been corrupted or altered." — Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (1344AD) on Surah 5:47

"The Torah and the Gospel are still in the People of the Book's hands exactly as God revealed; no letter was changed - only their meanings were distorted by interpretation." — Ibn Qutayba (889AD) on Surah 5:48

"The Quran's very testimony proves that the Torah, the Gospel and the Psalms are true and enduring; the real essence of those Scriptures therefore remains known for all time." — al-Razi (1209AD) on Surah 5:48

"We sent down the Book to you, O Muhammad, confirming the scriptures before it, and bearing witness that they are truth from God, trustworthy over them, preserving them." — al-Maḥallī & al-Suyūṭī (1459AD) on Surah 5:48

Opinions of Later Scholars

"The People of the Book concealed and misinterpreted their scriptures but did not abolish or replace the revealed texts themselves..." — Kitāb al-milal wa-al-niḥal (1153AD)

"After an extensive survey of Quranic passages that refer to the earlier scriptures, 'There is not a single expression regarding the previous scriptures throughout the Quran, but what is dictated by profound respect and reverence.'" — William Muir (1878)

"The text of the Holy scriptures has been altered neither before Muhammad, nor even during his life-time..." — Ignazio Di Matteo (1922AD)

"The great reverence with which the Quran speaks of the Gospel." — Baron Bernard Carra de Vaux (1927)

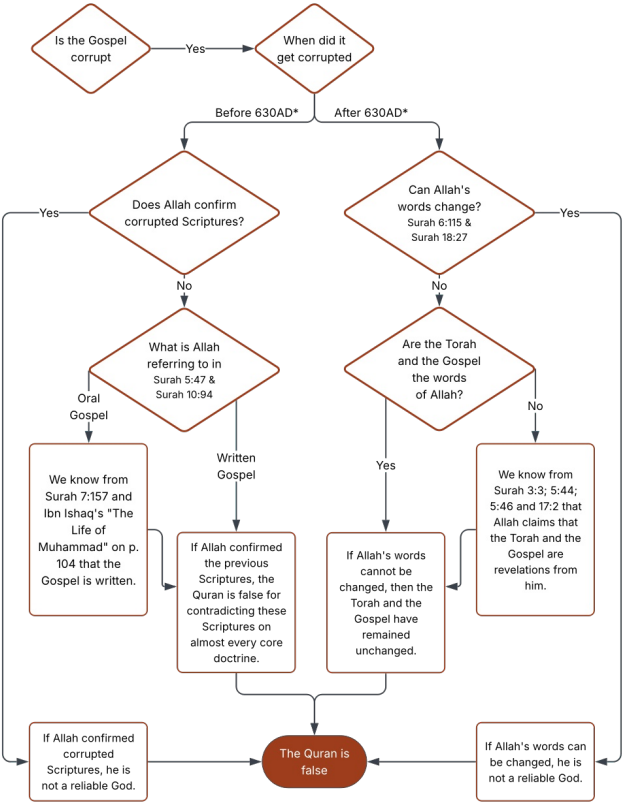
"The Quran does not put forward any general view of the corruption of the text of the Old and New Testaments." — William Montgomery Watt (1955)

"The Qur'ān does not accuse Jews and Christians of altering the text of their scriptures, but rather of altering the truth which those scriptures contain." — Maḥmūd Mustafā Ayoub (1986AD)

"The Kur'àn accepts the Tawrāt and Inǵjīl as genuine divine revelations taken from the same Guarded Tablets as the Kur'àn itself and brought by true messengers to both Jews and Christians respectively." — Hava Lazarus-Yafeh (2000AD)

"In no verse in the Quran is there a denigrating remark about the scriptures of the Jews and Christians. Instead, there is respect and reverence. Any disparaging remarks were about the People of the Book, individuals or groups, and their actions." — Abdullah Saeed (2002AD)

The Dilemma Visualized



*630AD is the year that Surah 5:47 was revealed, around two years before the death of Muhammad.

"He revealed the Torah and the Gospel." — Surah 3:3

"And We gave him (Jesus) the Gospel containing guidance and light and confirming what was revealed in the Torah." — Surah 5:46

"So let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed in it." — Surah 5:47

"The Word of your Lord has been perfected in truth and justice. None can change His Words." — Surah 6:115

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"If you O Prophet are in doubt about these stories that We have revealed to you, then ask those who read the Scripture before you." — Surah 10:94

"Recite what has been revealed to you from the Book of your Lord. None can change His Words." — Surah 18:27

"It is extracted from what John the Apostle set down for them when he wrote the Gospel for them from the Testament of Jesus Son of Mary." — Ibn Ishaq, The Life of Muhammad, p. 104

Common Objections

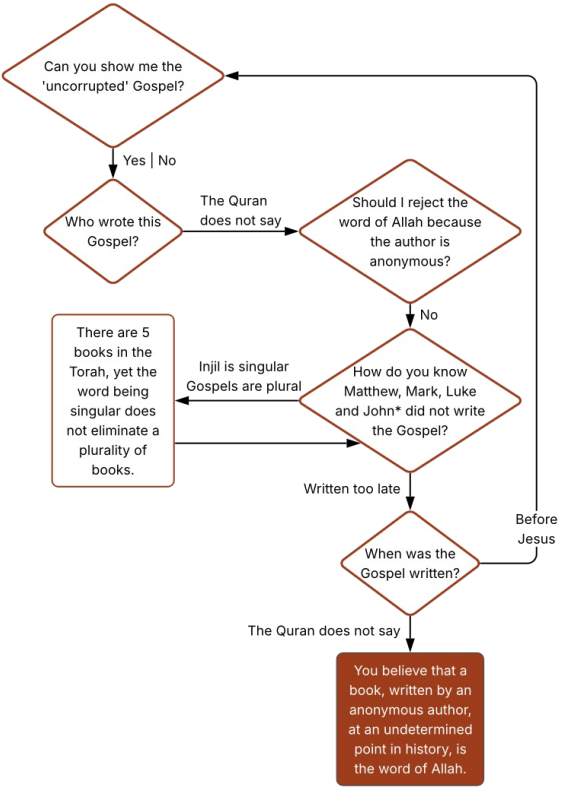
After presenting the dilemma through a set of Islamic sources and a powerful flowchart with critical questions, we can safely say that it makes no sense to claim that the previous Scriptures were corrupted by the time of Muhammad. Muslims might still raise several objections against the Scriptures we have today:

- The Torah and the Gospel we have today are not the same as the ones mentioned in the Quran.
- The Gospel authors are anonymous.
- The Injil mentioned in the Quran was a single, original Gospel given to Jesus, not the four Gospels we have today.
- The Gospels were written too late.

The following set of questions is aimed to tackle these objections, showing that every criticism a Muslim raises against the Gospel, can be applied equally to their own concept of the Injil.

Muslims have no historical or textual basis to claim that the Gospel we have today is not the same as the one mentioned in the Quran!

The "uncorrupted" Gospel



* In Ibn Ishaq's "The Life of Muhammad" on p. 104, it states that John the Apostle wrote the Injil.

The Gospel Muhammad Knew

The evidence from the Quran and early Islamic tradition creates an inescapable dilemma. To claim the Bible was corrupted requires believing in a global conspiracy that could alter thousands of manuscripts in multiple languages, across hostile borders, without a single historian or heretic ever recording the event. It is a historical impossibility.

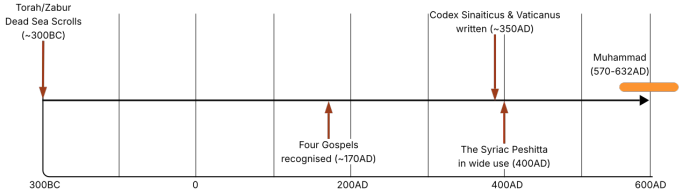
The Christians in and around Arabia during Muhammad's time were primarily Syriac-speaking. Their Bible, the version they knew as the "Gospel" or Injil, was the **Syriac Peshitta**. This Aramaic version of the Scriptures was ancient, revered, and widespread centuries before Islam.

The Peshitta contains the same four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It teaches the same core truths: the deity of Jesus Christ, His crucifixion for sin, and His resurrection.

The Peshitta is the most historically and linguistically logical candidate for the Injil mentioned in the Quran. If the Peshitta is the Gospel the Quran affirms, its message creates a direct contradiction with Islam's core claims. If it is not the Gospel the Quran affirms, then where is this other "uncorrupted" Injil?

The Burden of Proof

The Christian Scriptures were established and canonized centuries before the life of Muhammad.



To say that the Peshitta is not the true Injil and that the Bible has been changed requires evidence. Yet there is none! The burden of proof lies with the one making the claim, and they must answer three simple historical questions:

- **Who** changed the text?
- **When** was it changed?
- **Where** is a single manuscript of this so-called Injil that predates our vast manuscript evidence?

Without historical or textual evidence, the claim collapses, and what remains is the Quran testifying to a Gospel that history shows us is the Syriac Peshitta—which proclaims the same message as the Greek manuscripts. The Gospel affirmed by the Quran is the same Gospel in our hands today!

Glossary

Allah - The Arabic word for God. It is the same word used by Arabic-speaking Christians and Jews to refer to God.

Caliph - A political and religious leader of the Islamic community, regarded as the successor to Muhammad.

George of B'eltan - An 8th-century Christian bishop who engaged in theological debate with early Muslims, posing the logical challenge now known as the "Islamic Dilemma."

Hadith - A collection of traditions containing the sayings, actions, and silent approvals of the prophet Muhammad. Next to the Quran, these are the most important religious texts in Islam.

Ibn Ishaq - Early Muslim historian and biographer of Muhammad, author of Sirat Rasul Allah ("The Life of the Messenger of God"), the earliest surviving biography of Muhammad.

Injil (derived from the Greek evangelion) - The Arabic name for the Gospel as it was revealed to Jesus. Islamic theology teaches that the original Injil was a single book, which has since been lost or corrupted.

Muhaymin (مُهَيْمِن) - Guardian or protector.

Musaddiq (مُصَدِّق) - Confirming or affirming as true.

People of the Book - The Quranic term for Jews and Christians, referencing their possession of revealed Scriptures.

People of the Reminder - The Quranic term for those who possess prior revelation, often understood as Jews and Christians.

Peshitta - The standard version of the Bible for Syriac-speaking Christians, containing both the Old and New Testaments. It predates Islam and includes all Gospels.

Quran - The central religious text of Islam, which Muslims believe to be a revelation from God. It is considered the literal word of God as dictated to Muhammad.

Surah - A chapter of the Quran. The Quran is composed of 114 Surahs, arranged generally from longest to shortest.

Tafsir - Commentary on the Quran. A tafsir explains the meaning and context of Quranic verses. The work of early, classical commentators like al-Tabari and Ibn Kathir is highly respected in Islamic tradition.

Tahrif - The Islamic doctrine concerning the alteration or corruption of the previous Scriptures (the Torah and the Gospel). There are two types:

- Tahrif al-Ma'na - Corruption of the meaning. This view holds that the text of the Bible is intact, but its interpretation has been distorted.
- Tahrif al-Nass - Corruption of the text. This view holds that the words and sentences of the Bible's original manuscripts were physically changed.

Tasdiq (تَصْدِيق) - Confirmation or attestation of truth.

Tawrat - The Arabic name for the revelation given to Moses. The Quran affirms it as a book of guidance and light from God.

More to Talk About

This volume of the book is just the beginning. If your conversation raises questions not covered in these pages, scan the QR-code below to access the Armor and Arrows digital content. There you will find deeper answers and extended topics that equip you to stand firm and speak boldly — wherever the conversation leads.

The battlefield is not new, but the questions are sharper. Christians are increasingly challenged by Muslims who claim to hold the only true uncorrupted word of God.

Armor and Arrows is your compact, powerful debate manual, built for action. It equips you with:

- Critical questions that expose weaknesses in Islam.
- Sharp facts, not opinions — sourced, concise, Biblical.
- Solid answers to defend the reliability of the Gospel.

Whether you are engaging in calm conversation or intense debate, this pocket-sized field guide will prepare you to speak the truth in love — with clarity, courage and conviction.

"Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect." — 1 Peter 3:15